

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND REPORTS

4 June 1958

Office Notice 51-00-1

UTILIZATION OF THE SERVICES OF OCR

1. The Office of Central Reference has instituted a program of executive action aimed at making the facilities of OCR more responsive to the needs of producing analysts and at making these analysts more fully aware of those services of OCR which are available to support the research effort. A Central Reference Advisory Group (CRAG), on which the Assistant Directors of the producing DD/I components and the Chief of FI are members, provides the AD/CR with guidance in the conduct of programs in support of research and operations. From time to time I shall ask appropriate officers to conduct selective surveys to provide me with information that will permit ORR to give proper support to CRAG.

2. Some of the concerns which face responsible officers in OCR, in their efforts to improve the services of OCR facilities and to encourage fuller utilization of these facilities, can be understood from the following excerpts of an OCR Status Report of March 1958:

"To efficiently locate specific items of information in published literature has been a chronic research problem. In intelligence, the problem is even more formidable because of the staggering volume of reports produced and the fragmentary character of their content. Documentation organizations have, therefore, been forced to find new ways and means by which conventional operations could be reshaped and simplified. Thus far, the adoption of sound management practices and the mechanization of technical processes have been the only changes generally introduced. Considerable attention, however, has also been given to the criteria and methods of indexing the literature, a factor which may be defined as 'the intellectual input.' Although machines are able to manipulate and select references rapidly, the consistent and uniform subject classification of content by humans is the crucial operation, and the success of a retrieval system depends almost entirely upon the way in which this part of the work is done. Consequently, much effort and money has been spent, both within and outside of the intelligence community, to investigate various methods of organizing information by subject."

* * * * *

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

DOCUMENT NO. 12
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
☒ DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S G
NEXT REVIEW DATE: _____
AUTH: HR 70-2
25 MAR 1980
DATE: _____

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

Office Notice 51-00-1

"Another area under observation is that of the relationship between the researcher and the documentation center - what should the researcher expect the central reference system to provide for him, and what should the documentation center expect the researcher to do for himself? At one extreme there are the researchers who favor a 'push-button' reference system which will electronically prepare a satisfactory solution to any research problem, while others demand the privilege of manually 'sifting' for themselves. Somewhere between lies a balanced relationship, and much work and experimentation is being done to determine its exact locus.

"Lastly, there are the machines and the role they are destined to play in solving information organization problems. ...there has been little practical experience with non-statistical, 'intellectual' applications. In the latter instance, machines are known to be capable of digesting and assimilating data efficiently, but only if the input is intelligently supplied to them in palatable form."

* * * * *

"Concomitant with the volume of classified and unclassified literature required for intelligence research is the problem of ensuring that pertinent materials reach the researchers promptly and in their entirety, and that materials not bearing on a current intelligence problem can be stored in such manner that their recall, upon demand, is assured.

"The optimum solution of these two basic problems depends chiefly upon the intellectual process of selection.... One of the most fundamental problems confronting the intelligence community is the question of how to refine our requirement-levying mechanism in order to reduce the volume of information entering the intelligence machinery.

"Once collected materials have arrived at headquarters, they must be screened, sorted, coded, disseminated, and distributed. Research is now underway to mechanize at least some of these steps."

* * * * *

-2-


~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~

Office Notice 51-00-1

"How to supply the consumer with a desired selection of documents as quickly as possible is still another aspect of mass data handling. Experimentation with rapid reproduction methods, closed circuit television, new collation methods, first-cut analysis, and team approaches to reference service - all are contributing to increased efficiency in the servicing of requests. Mechanization has a role here, but it is generally agreed that satisfactory fulfillment of individual requests cannot be achieved without application of the intellectual process."

3. Particular attention is called to the expressed desire of the DD/I that all analysts, as a matter of regular research procedure, should fully utilize the support offered by OCR facilities. Analysts should also explore ways in which the special services of the CIA Library might be effectively used, now and in the future.


Assistant Director

2

RR Distribution No. 4

-3-

~~S-E-C-R-E-T~~